

Scout leaders notes



The Hiker badge involves the troop planning a 12km or 20km walk whilst finding 2 geocaches along the way. As a leader you need to decide which area you are going to undertake the badge then log on to geocaching.com to find geocaches in that area to give the troop an idea of routes they could go. Plot the route by marking waypoints on the GPS that lead you to the geocaches and back. Make the route as interesting as possible; maybe give the group a chance take a break mid way to sketch or take photos of a landmark or brilliant landscape.

What is Geocaching? (Pronounced GEO-CASH- ING)

Geocaching is an outdoor adventure game using GPS technology to create a high-tech treasure hunt. Caches are planted in hidden locations across the landscape in rural or urban areas. A cache is a small, waterproof box containing a selection of items including a logbook and pen or pencil. Geocachers seek out these hidden treasures guided by information and GPS coordinates, or 'waypoints' posted on the Internet. There are over 700,000 geocaches world wide and over 40,000 in the UK!

Geocaching.com is the most popular geocaching website. Simply create a free account, search for caches in your area, pick one you want to find, download the coordinates to your sat nav and hunt down the cache.

Once home, return to the geocaching.com and leave your comments for the hider and for other Geocachers who want to track it down.

The Rules

Once the scouts finds a cache, they must:

1. Fill in the logbook with their name and date to show they've found it.
2. Take something out of the cache (if desired or available).
3. Put something into the cache (if requested).
4. Return the cache to the exact position and condition in which it was found.
5. Once home, log the details of their discovery, and any helpful comments on the geocaching.com.

How to train your troop

OBJECTIVES

- Gain an understanding of how GPS technology works.
- Practice using a handheld GPS receiver.
- Describe geocaching and how it can be used to support the Scouting program.
- Understand geocaching rules and etiquette and why they are important.
- Consider how geocaching can be used in public relations events.
- Experience the fun of a geohunt yourself.

EQUIPMENT

- Basic GPS units, minimum of 1 per team, At least 4 no more than 7
- Sample cache container (Tupper wear box) to show as an example
- A list of caches and coordinates in the local vicinity

If the scouts are to use their own GPS receivers, it is important to ensure that they are suitable. They need to be outdoor handheld GPS systems similar to Garmin's eTrex, Colorado or Oregon range. In-car sat-nav's can only navigate between postcodes and do not enable you to mark waypoints.

Training Methods

A typical session would:

- Introduce the concept of GPS navigation.
- Describe the basic features and practice using a handheld GPS receiver outside.
- Introduce Garmin, Geocaching, explaining its origins, geocaching.com and the registration process.
- Discuss the range of potential geocaching locations, from urban to extreme terrain.
- Explain geocaching rules and etiquette, the UK specifics and why they are important. Following the Country Code, GAGB guidelines, land access, permission and agreements. Particularly emphasise the importance of security, where suspicious containers can be misidentified as terrorist devices.
- Explain Travel Bugs and Geocoins.
- Find a selection of caches hidden in your vicinity to demonstrate geocaching to the troop.
- Cover Child Protection issues and explain how a Scout geocache event could remain "off-line" until after it has taken place.



GARMIN 

What is geocaching and how do I use a GPS handheld?



GARMIN

What is Geocaching?

It's pronounced GEO-CASH-ING. There are 700,000 geocaches or 'caches' worldwide and over 40,000 in the UK, it's your job is to find them! Geocaching is an outdoor adventure game using GPS (Global Positioning System) technology to create a high-tech treasure hunt. Caches are planted in hidden locations across the landscape in rural or urban areas. A cache is a small, waterproof box containing a selection of items including a logbook and pen or pencil. Geocachers seek out these hidden treasures guided by information and GPS coordinates, or 'waypoints' posted on the internet; www.geocaching.com

Using a Garmin GPS device, the Geocacher explores an area where a cache has been hidden. Once discovered, you may find the cache contains a reward for you to keep. If you take something out of a cache, you might be asked to leave something in return. You must leave the cache in the same place and in the same condition as it was found for its next visitor. Sometimes a cache will contain a clue to find another hidden treasure!

Once home, return to the cache website and leave your comments for the hider and for other Geocachers inspired to track it down. To keep the game going, you must also hide some caches of your own.

How to mark a waypoint

1. To turn the GPS on press the button on the bottom right-hand side.
2. Stand outside in an open area with no trees overhead.
3. Wait for the GPS to get a satellite reception (this can take a couple minutes)
4. Once you have satellite signal press the FUNCTION button at the top right-hand side of the GPS. This lets you switch between various screens. This button also acts as a BACK button to take you back to the previous screen.
5. In MAIN MENU, press the button on the front of the GPS to select MARK (This is how you plot a WAYPOINT to mark the location of your chosen geocache).
6. You can rename your WAYPOINT by selecting the number on the flag and entering a new name.
7. Key in the coordinates of the geocache you have chosen from geocaching.com. Then select the GO TO button at the bottom of the screen and the GPS will guide you to your selected location.
8. The compass screen will tell you the speed you are walking, how far away you are from your WAYPOINT and the direction in which you are heading
9. The Trip Computer screen will tell you how far you have traveled (TRIP ODOMETER), your current speed, your average speed (MOVING AVERAGE) and how long you have been walking (MOVING TIME).

How to plot a route

1. To plot a route first you need to plot the WAYPOINTS. These mark places on the route you need to follow to reach your end destination. You can plot up to 20 waypoints on a single route.
2. From the MAIN MENU select ROUTES. Then select NEW. You can rename your route by selecting the name field which will be displayed as EMPTY.
3. Select the dotted line to open the FIND menu. Select the WAYPOINTS option. This will give you a list of your saved WAYPOINTS.
4. Select the WAYPOINT you want to find first. This will be listed as the first WAYPOINT. Select the dotted line underneath the list of WAYPOINTS to add further WAYPOINTS.
5. Once you have plotted your ROUTE via your saved WAYPOINTS, select NAVIGATE and the GPS will direct you to your first one. Once you reach your first waypoint the GPS will lead you on to the next until you reach your final destination.

Glossary of Terms



GARMIN

GPSr/GPS - A Global Positioning System receiver, usually referred to as a GPS. In reality a combination of the satellites and the receiver make up the system.

Geocache - Often called simply a 'Cache', this is the actual container placed at the waypoint. The word is formed from 'Geo' for Earth and 'Cache' for a store of goods or supplies, often left by explorers.

Geocaching - A recreational activity that involves seeking a container hidden at a given set of coordinates, finding it, recording your details in the logbook and re-hiding it for the next person to find.

Waypoint - A specific place with a set of coordinates you can programme into a GPS before you set off or mark when you're at the location to return to the same point later.

Heading - The direction you are travelling.

Bearing - The direction to the selected waypoint.

Route - A path between two or more waypoints.

Geocoin - A geocaching coin which has a trackable number on it so you can track its location on geocaching.com.

Latitude - The North/South component of a set of coordinates for a location on the Earth.

Longitude - The East/West component of a set of coordinates for a location on the Earth.

Multi-Cache - A type of cache that requires several waypoints to complete. The first waypoint may contain a small cache with the coordinates of the next stage. Or several waypoints might each contain parts of the coordinates for the final waypoint.

Trackback - The ability to reverse a route on a GPS to help the Geocacher return to their starting point.

Track Log - This is how the GPS automatically records points along a route - in an electronic 'breadcrumb trail'.

Travel Bug - An item with an Identity Tag and unique tracking number which can be tracked on the internet as it is moved from cache to cache.